

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, October 25. 1707.

AND thus I have found out two Funds for the next Years War, the *Spanish* Galeons, or their Pyrates of *Madagascar*—Take which you will, Gentlemen, or if you will have it, which you can. As to the last, I confess, it is something doubtful, not only whether they will offer such a Treasure for their Pardon, but really whether they have such a Treasure or no; nor till the Experiment is made, is it worth while to talk of it any farther.

As to the *First*, of taking the Galeons, *Vigo* is a standing Instance of the Feazibleness of the thing, and all the World is Master of the Case, as to the Value of it.

And this puts me in Mind, how often in a War with *Spain*, did Queen *Elizabeth* enrich her self, and furnish not her own Coffers only, but the whole Nation with Treasure.

From the *Spanish West-Indies*, how did Sir *Francis Drake* plunder the Coasts, take their Towns; and even load his Vessels Home with their Spoils; and at Sea, how often did we meet their great Carricks and Carvels, as they called them, Ships of 1500 Tun, built like Castles; what Work did our Men of War make with them almost every Year?

We are stronger now at Sea a great deal, and the *Spaniards* much weaker; their Ships are as rich now, as they were then, and I think verily, we want the Money as much—Why then should we not set to work with them the same Way? To say they are stronger now than they were then, and better fortify'd on Shore; This is to be answer'd in French, *a-la-mode a Carthagena*, Monsieur *Pointy* was not baulk'd, but took the City, tho'

tho' the 12 Apostles defended it, and took their Apostleships away with him into the Bargain.

But besides all this, what shall we say to our Merchants, that fit out Privateers, and cruise upon the *French*, and make little enough of it? And why, Gentlemen, did you never try your Fortune in the Bay of *Mexico*, or upon the Coast of *Carthagena*, or in the *South Seas*, where the *French* have now so great and so profitable a Trade? Ten or twelve large Ships well mann'd and furnish'd, Ships of 40 to 50 Gun each, for such the *Dutch* have now in the *Streights*, and in two Bodies, but to act in Concert; they would sweep the *South Seas* of the *French*; they would have plunder'd *Lima*, *Panama*, and all the Coast of *Chili*; they would have gone into any of their Ports, and taken the very Shipping out of the Harbours; they would have done anything they had desir'd on the other Hand, had each Ship carry'd about 10000*l.* in *English Goods*, honest wool-len Manufactures; the *Spaniards* would, protected by your Ships, frankly have traded with you, if you had declared Freedom of Trade, and every hundred Pound *Sterling* had made five.

I have observ'd Abundance of People fruitful in Complaints, that the *Spanish Trade* is lost, and that Fleets are not sent to the Coasts of *America*. Really, Gentlemen, the Complaint is not so just on the Government, as it is on your selves; have you ever made this Attempt both of War and Trade? Is there any Doubt, but, if you had, the *QUEEN's* Ships would have had Order on all Occasions to farther your Attempts, and protect you as much as possible from the Enemy? — Why have you not large Vessels Every Year plying the Coast of *Mexico*, strong enough to trade by Force, as well as by Stealth? Has ever any Vessel gone upon that Trade, but what has met with Success? And do not the *Spaniards* there want the Trade, as much as we want their Money? 'Tis apparent, they do, by the Prices they will give, when they meet with our *Jamaica Sloops*, the Eagerness they show to the Trade, and the Risque they run for it.

Complain then no more of the Loss of the *Spanish Trade*, while 'tis thus open to

you, and while you see your Enemies grow rich by it, and while the thing appears so feasible; there is nothing required to this Trade, but to send Ships of Force, and in Concert upon a Joint-Foot, that Emulations and separate Interest might not cheque the Success of the Design, which has indeed been the Ruin of many a good Attempt.

Were this pursued, we should not be so empty of Bullion, as we appear to be, nor be so uneasy at carrying it out again, where the Necessity of Trade requires it, either by Prices or by Trade. or by both, the Supply of Bullion would be renew'd, and the Encrease of our Trade visibly forwarded; for 'tis too well known to admit Dispute, that the Trade to the *Spanish West-Indies* was both the Life of its Manufactures, and the Fountain of our Bullion. And this was the Reason, why in the late King's Time, tho' the War pinch'd us harder than it does now, publick Credit being then in its Infancy; yet we had a Supply of Bullion, the Streams run full, our Manufactures went out, and Bullion came in, the *Spanish Trade* being open and free; and this alone made that Prodigy of Management feasible, I mean, the Changing of Coin at a Time, when no Nation in the World, but *England*, could have brought such a thing to pass.

On the other Hand, Credit has been our amazing Support, and if the Exchequer had not by the most exquisite Management been brought to command a Credit she never knew in *England* before, and which by the most barbarous Act that ever this Nation knew, was entirely lost; I mean, the shutting it up in King *Charles II's* Time: I say, if this Credit had not reviv'd, this War could not have been carry'd on, and that merely by that one Article, the Want of Bullion.

Never complain then for Want of the *Spanish Trade*. 'Tis as open as in a Time of War, you could expect it should be; and 'tis open enough, if you had Souls to venture like other Nations, both to trade with, or plunder your Enemies; but we love to sit at home and complain, rather than look abroad and labour, tho' to our own Advantage.

MISCELLANEA.

AND thus Gentlemen, this Author is drawing his Discourse of the Campaigns to a Close for this Year; and the Jest of War, which like a State Farce, has been acting all over Europe this Year, begins to be too stale to laugh at—All the Heads in Europe are now going to work, to the tricking the intriguing Part, leaguings, caballing, forming Confederacies, and Party-making; and I doubt not, but we shall have our Share of it, of which I shall take Notice in its Place.

Ways and Means is the Business, raising this necessary Foundation of all Mischief, THE MONEY, is now the main Thing upon the Wheels—So that contriving new Wars, and finding Money to carry on the old, is the Matter before us.

But is not the Pope a brave Fellow now, that has fir'd a whole Volley of Church Thunder-Bolts against the Ministers, and Generals of the Emperor, and the Duke of Savoy?—Indeed, 'tis contrary to the constant Practice of the *Romish* Politicks; for the Popes always us'd to take up with the strongest Side, always us'd to fawn upon Conquerors; but here 'tis just contrary, his Holiness shews a most undaunted Resolution in his own Cause, for he is stiffer in the Affair of *Naples* now than ever; he is as far from granting the Investiture, and farther from owning King *Charles*, now the *Germans* are Masters of the whole Country, than ever he was; nor has the Imperial Armies, being at the Gates, nay, within the very Gates of *Rome*, been able to alter the Resolution, but his Holiness resolves in the Strength of St. Peter to die a Martyr for his Ecclesiastick Dignities and Privileges; nor is it unlikely but this Boldness of the old Gentleman rises from some secret Assurance he has form'd of Assurances; and this to me is a good Reason to believe, the Rumour of a tripple League in *Italy*, between the Pope, the *Venetian*, and the Duke of *Tuscany*, has something more in it, than we have expected to find—And I am mistaken, if in a little Time we do not see a

new War begun in *Italy*. But let them fall out and fall in, I do not see, how it can affect us, save that it will still more embarrass the Affairs of the Emperor; all which we owe to the *Neapolitan* Expedition, 'an Affair the *Germans* shall have my Thanks for, ironically speaking, as often as I think of the Siege of *Thoulon*.

Nor am I of the Opinion, that the *Turk* will always be so honest, as he has been hitherto, unless some great Revolution at Home put him beside his Interest; the *Turk* does not use to be such a Slave to his Treaties, as this has been against his own Interest, and that when so strongly solicited too; but if the *Turk* should fall in upon the Emperor at this Time, I know not what to say of the Affairs of Europe on that side; but this I am perswaded, it would incline us all to Peace.

I shall not enter here into the several Methods, by which the *Turk* might advantage himself of the present Confusions of Europe, and how he would in Effect ruin us all at this Time; I may perhaps have it suggested, that I am writing for the *Turk*, a Thing altogether as likely, as that I was writing for the *French*; and I am perswaded, there are as many of this Paper seen at *Constantinople*, as at *Paris*—But in general I must own, I expect two new Wars upon the Stage of Europe next Summer, both which I have touch'd at here, I mean, the *Turk* and the *Italian*.

In the mean time let us look a little into the Winter Affairs of the World, Gentlemen, and see, what clever Steps are taking now to raise Money for the next Years War; and where shall we begin, let us go abroad first, and take Home in our Return.

The King of *France* has call'd a Parliament of his great Officers, to consider of Ways and Means; where one of the main Questions about Money is, not how the Subjects can pay it, but how to make them do it; *France* having for several Years made the People pay more than they had; has now his Inventions on the Wheel, how to make

make them pay more than they can; Edicts to repeat Edicts, Mint-Bills, imaginary Funds, enjoying Offices they never bought, and buying Offices they never enjoy. It's thought, *France* makes all the Money in the Nation circulate through the Exchequer above 12 Times a Year, and is every Jot as expert in that Part of his Affairs, as in the Field.

Come we to the Empire, there the Affair is rais'd by Quota's and Contingents, and comes into the Soldiers, perhaps much about as well as the Soldiers come into the Field; *Bohemia* is generally barrangued into it, and long Speeches to the States sets the Wheels on Work there; *Italy* is talk'd into it by the Mouth of the Cannon, *Mil-lain* and *Mantua*, *Parma* and *Modena*, they are only to give what is ask'd—Armies generally raise Money the shortest Way, and they eat till these pay, and yet eat up, what they should pay it with; thus the Imperialists eat up *Bavaria*, the *Muscovites* *Poland*, the *Hungarians* *Austria*, and the *French* *Swabia*.

Among all our Ways and Means, *Spain* has got a new Step; *Philip V.* has gotten a Son, and all the Cities, Towns, Churches, Noble-men, and Provinces must come to Court, and make Presents to buy this Babe Blankets, and instead of Blankets, he lays it out in Powder and Ball. In *France*, the Clergy make the King a Present, because if they don't give it, he will take it; in *Spain* our Sovereign Lord the Pope gives Leave to tax the Clergy; in *Savoy* they take Leave; poor *Naples* is to be excused from paying any more than they did before, because they paid before, all they had.

Thus the Money is rais'd under all the specious Forms of Taxation, Capitation, Contribution, Presents, Free-Gifts, Loans, and such like, but the *English* of it all is, it is rais'd at the Point of the Sword, the People have a Compliment put upon them, a fine gay Term, like a Rattle to the Child to keep him quiet, which, if all won't do, is laid by, and the Rod brought in its Place, and then the Child submits, and the Rattle goes on. In short, the whole World is bul-

lied out of their Money, or wheedled out of it, but *England*; happy Nation, happy *Britains*! and did they know their own Happiness, they would be happy indeed; Here no Taxes are levied, but by our own Consent; no Demand made, but the Occasion is represented, and we our selves are made Judges for our selves, whether we ought to pay them or no: After they are given, if they are misapply'd, it embezzl'd, we have a Right to examine and require it, 'tis given by us, and accounted for to us. Happy People, did we but understand and value our own Felicity, and know how to use it! The best Way to do which, is to compare it with the Bondage and Slavery, the Oppressions and Subjection of other Nations.

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